

NCLB Key Provisions and Timelines

The overall goal of No Child Left Behind (NCLB) is to have all students achieving state standards by 2014. Between now and 2014, states, districts and schools must take a series of specific steps toward that goal.

Under the new federal law, schools, districts and states must focus intensively on challenging academic standards in reading, mathematics and science and create tests based on them. Washington state is well ahead of many states in this effort because of the Washington Assessment of Student Learning (WASL). The new law also requires accountability for the performance of every child and the guarantee of a highly qualified teacher in every classroom. Although all public schools are subject to the NCLB goals and reporting requirements, only schools receiving federal funds under Title I of the No Child Left Behind Act will be subject to specific requirements for corrective action.

Key Provisions

Testing and Achievement

- By 2005-06, states will test every student annually in reading and mathematics from grades 3-8 and at least once in these subjects in grades 10-12. Washington state already has WASL tests in reading and mathematics in place for students in grades 4, 7 and 10. Additional tests are being developed to meet the requirements of the new law for students in grades 3, 5, 6 and 8.
- By 2007-08, states must test students in science at least once during grades 3-5, grades 6-9 and grades 10-12. The WASL in science has already been developed for grades 5, 8 and 10.
- States set specific scores, known as “proficiency levels,” on their reading and mathematics tests that indicate performance against the standards. These tests reflect Washington state’s academic standards.
- States next set student performance goals – the percentage of students overall and the percentage of students in specific groups expected to achieve proficiency – based on test results from previous years.
- Student performance goals will be raised on a regular schedule between now and 2014 so that by 2014, all students – and all subgroups of students – will be achieving state standards.
- Test scores must be publicly reported, not just for schools, but also for specific groups within schools, including low-income students, those belonging to racial or ethnic minorities, and students with disabilities or limited English proficiency.
- Schools and districts must demonstrate annually that all students – and all groups of students – are meeting state performance goals in order to make Adequate Yearly Progress (AYP).
- Schools and districts will not be counted as making AYP if any one (or more) of the specific student groups misses the performance goal in either reading or math. It doesn’t matter if the school misses the goal by a little or a lot, or by one group of students or many. All groups must meet the goals for a school to make AYP.
- If schools or districts do not make AYP in the same subject area for two years in a row, they are considered “schools in need of improvement.”
- If “schools in need of improvement” receive Title I funds (federal support for high-poverty schools), special requirements apply to them. These requirements include both financial and technical assistance and the development and implementation of a school improvement plan. In addition, eligible parents will be able

to transfer their children to other public schools that are not “in improvement” or get outside tutoring assistance for them.

- School improvement efforts must focus on programs and approaches that have research evidence demonstrating their effectiveness.
- If schools getting Title I funds continue to fall short of AYP, they will face more extensive changes over the course of several years, including options such as: possible restructuring, state takeover or management by private firms.

Teacher and Paraprofessional Quality

- In every school, all teachers of core academic subjects (i.e. English, language arts, mathematics, science, foreign languages, civics and government, economics, history, geography and the arts) must be “highly qualified” by 2005-06.
- Between now and 2005-06, only Title I teachers hired after the first day of the 2002-03 school year must meet these requirements. Other teachers, who don't meet the highly qualified requirements, must take steps to become highly qualified by the end of 2005-06 school year.
- “Highly qualified” teachers must have a bachelor’s degree and hold full state teacher certification. They must also either hold national board certification in the core academic subject(s) they are assigned to teach, **OR** be endorsed in the core academic subject(s) they are assigned to teach.
- States must develop plans to ensure that all teachers are highly qualified by 2005-06, setting measurable goals for districts and schools. States and districts must report annually on their progress and on the percentage of teachers getting professional development to help them become highly qualified.
- Title I schools must notify parents annually that they can request information on their children’s teacher qualifications. Parents in these schools must also be notified if their child is taught for more than four weeks by a teacher who does not meet the federal law’s definition of “highly qualified.”
- Paraprofessionals newly hired after January 2002 must have at least two years of college or an associate’s degree. They must also demonstrate knowledge of and the ability to assist with reading, writing and mathematics through a formal state or local assessment. Currently employed paraprofessionals have until 2006 to meet these requirements.

Overall Timelines

Starting 2003-04

States must begin to designate schools that are not making AYP and those that are in school improvement.

By 2005-06

States must measure progress in reading and mathematics for every student in grades 3-8 and at least once for students in grades 10-12.

By the end of the 2005-06 school year

States must ensure that all teachers are highly qualified.

By 2007-08

States must measure student progress in science at least once during each of the following grade spans: 3-5; 6-9; 10-12.

By the end of the 2013-14 school year

States must demonstrate that all students are meeting the federally required goals for achieving state standards.

NCLB Timelines for Schools In Need of Improvement

After two years, schools in need of improvement that receive Title I funds must take the following steps, proceeding to the next step in the series if they continue to fall short of the AYP goal.

After 2 years

Schools must adopt 2-year improvement plans, invest in professional development for teachers and give parents the option to transfer their children to a higher-performing public school in the district, with the district using its Title I funds to pay for transportation. Priority transfers will go to the lowest-achieving low-income students.

After 3 years

Schools continue improvement efforts, fund transportation for public school choice, and give students from low-income families the option of obtaining supplemental education services (i.e. tutoring) from state-approved providers using some of the district's Title I funds.

After 4 years

Schools continue previous improvement activities and are also subject to "corrective action." Corrective action is taken by the school district and must involve one or more of the following: implementing a new curriculum, replacing school staff, appointing an outside expert as advisor, extending the school day/year, or restructuring the school.

After 5 years

Schools must plan for restructuring, which may involve replacing staff or contracting with a private firm to manage the school.

After 6 years

Schools must implement their restructuring plan.

AYP TIMELINE FOR SCHOOLS (Consequences apply only to schools receiving Title I funds)

